

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 SS-15 NSC-05
ACDA-10 DODE-00 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /068 W
-----080304Z 102592 /66

R 071425Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5612
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2458

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR,IS, EG
SUBJECT: MORE PRESS REACTION TO SADAT VISIT

REF: TEL AVIV 2382

1. SADAT'S BLAIR HOUSE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS FULLY COVERED IN TODAY'S PRESS WITH FEATURE ATTENTION ON HIS USE OF THE WORD "NOMALIZATION" IN DESCRIBING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL FOLLOWING A PEACE AGREEMENT AND HIS ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF EXCHANGING ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS. MAARIV SAW NO MODERATION IN HIS POSITIONS IN HIS REMARKS AND "SILENCES" AND WAS PARTICULARLY DISTURBED BY HIS CALL FOR A CORRIDOR LINKING THE WEST BANK WITH THE GAZA STRIP, NOTING THAT SADAT'S DEMAND FOR TERRITORIAL CONTINUITY FOR THE PALESTINIANS WOULD DENY IT TO ISRAEL.

2. THE JERUSALEM POST MAINTAINED THAT IT REQUIRED "A GREAT DEAL OF BRAZENNESS" FOR SADAT TO CLAIM THAT THE PLO HAD RECENTLY "DEMONSTRATED MODERATION AND A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY." THE POST JUXTAPOSED
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THIS ASSERTION BY SADAT WITH THE REPORTED ADMISSION BY ZUHAIR MOHSIN THAT PALESTINIAN NATIONHOOD IS BUT A TACTICAL DEVICE TO FIGHT ZIONISM. HAARETZ NOTES THAT SADAT HAS BEEN UNDERSCORING THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN HIS WASHINGTON VISIT AND ADDS WITH SCORN THAT HE "MADE HIMSELF THE MOUTHPIECE OF THE PLO."

3. HOWEVER, THE MAIN OBJECT OF PRESS CONCERN SEEMS TO BE SADAT'S ARMS REQUEST. BOTH THE POST AND YEDIOT AHARONOT SEE ARMS TO EGYPT AS A DIVISIVE ISSUE WITHIN THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION, WITH THE FORMER DECLARING IT WILL "...TAKE ALL THE PERSUASION THAT ISRAEL CAN MUSTER TO CONVINCE WASHINGTON POLICY-MAKERS THAT OFFENSIVE AMERICAN ARMS SOLD TO EGYPT ARE FOR USE NOT, AS SADAT CONTENDS, TO WARD OFF SOVIET RUSSIA'S 'SINISTER PLOTS' IN AFRICA, BUT AGAINST ISRAEL."

4. IN THE SAME VEIN MAARIV EDITORIALIZES THAT "ATTEMPTS TO PRESENT THE EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR ARMS AS BEING PROMPTED BY SADAT'S FERVENT WISH TO SAVE THE AFRICAN CONTINENT FROM THE SOVIET DANGER IS NO LESS FOOLISH THAN THE EXPLANATION THAT FOR THAT VERY PURPOSE EGYPT NEEDS AMERICAN 'DEFENSIVE WEAPONS.'" DUNNIGAN

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Message Attributes

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